

A

REVIEW

OF THE

Affairs of *FRANCE*:

Purg'd from the Errors and Partiality of *News-Writers*
and *Petty-Statefmen*, of all Sides.

Tuesday, May 2. 1704.

THe Conquest the King of *France* has made over the Duelling Humour of his Subjects, is the Theme we are upon, and some Digression on that Head has been made to our *English* Affairs, which as it is what I shall very seldom do, I hope the Reader will excuse.

I might Enlarge here on the vulgar Errors of Behaviour, and the Mistaken Notions Men have Entertain'd by the Folly of Custom, concerning Honour, Gallantry, and Courage; but History is rather my Business, and I shall make as few Excursions as Possible.

I have met with some that will alledge, The King of *France* has several times broken his Oath in the matter of Duelling, and the Severity with which he Threatn'd his Subjects, has been Mitigated frequently, and in particular in the Case of Monsieur de *St. A*——, who, at the Intercession of Madam de *Montespan*, and just at the time when his Majesty was more particularly a Captive to that Lady, was recall'd from Banishment, and admitted to his Favour. — But those who defend the King's Honour in this Case, tell us, The King was acquainted, that this Gentleman tho' he fled, was not Actually in the Affair. The Business in short was thus: There had

been two or three Families Embroiled in the Quarrel, and in spight of all the Terror of the King's Edict and Oath, they met in an Island of the *Sein*, and Fought rather a little Battail, than a Duel, for they met six or eight of a side, and two or three were kill'd, the rest shifted.

This Gentleman having so strong an Intercessor, obtain'd his Majesty's Licence to come Home and take his Tryal in Order to Convince his Majesty that he was Innocent: I won't say but things might be subtilly manag'd, and that Powerful Lady Order'd all things in such manner, that tho' it was too well known he was Wounded in the Action, yet before the Judges it was made very clear, that he was Innocent of all the matter. 'Twas prov'd that he advis'd the Gentleman not to meet, and refus'd to be concern'd, and several such Circumstances, by Dexterity of Management. and no body coming in to Prosecute, he was absolutely clear'd of the Fact, by the Process of the Law.

How far this can concern the King, I leave to any one to determine; nay, tho' all that is alledg'd should be true, that he was Actually in the Business, and receiv'd a Wound there, yet no Man is Guilty as to the Publick, but he that is prov'd so; and

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if this Gentleman was Acquitted in a Court of Justice, by a Formal Process of the Law, the King nor his Oath, was not concern'd at all.

Be it as it will, the King has so far observ'd his Oath, and so far Conquer'd this Destructive Humour in his Subjects, that you don't hear of a Duel fought in *France* from one Years end to another, and instead of Eternal Quarrels and Bloodshed which that *Passionate Nation* was every day Embroil'd in; there is an Entire Regulation of Conversation among the Persons of Rank: If there are Heats at any time happen in Company, all the Friends on both sides concern themselves to make it up, nay, whoever is in the Company, Friends or not, will engage in the Work; for the Consequences are so Fatal to the Persons, and so uneasie to all their Friends, that the consideration of it seems to have made a Conquest, even upon their Reason.

If the Extremities of Matters are forc'd up too high, and any Affront is given, the Marshals of *France* have a Court Erected for that purpose, and 'tis their Business to Judge in Points of Honour, and to make Reparations and *L'Amend Honorable*, when awarded by them, gives full Satisfaction in Case of an Affront; and this Proceeding Solves every Man's Reputation, for no Man now obtains the Name of a Coward for refusing to give a Challenge, and no Wise Man will venture to put it in his Power to accept one. By which Method the Publick Peace is Absolutely preserv'd; the Court of the Marshals is a Court of Honour, and any Man has there a full Recompence for an Incivility, and many times in extraordinary Cases, the King takes up a Cause himself.

The Count de *Rochefort* in his Memoirs, gives us a Story of two Young Gentlemen who liv'd in *Bretaign*, and their Lands joyned together, their Parks were not far off, and this gave frequent occasions of Clashings and Quarrels between the Servants, Huntsmen and Game-keepers of each other; and these Quarrels had so far Affected the Masters, that the Fathers of those two Gentlemen had fought a Duel, in which one had the Misfortune to be kill'd.

This happened before the Present King's Time; and this Accident giving the Friends of both Parties Reason to fear the Broil should affect their Children, they apply themselves to his Majesty upon his Publishing his Edict against Duelling; to beseech his Majesty to lay his Special Injunction upon those two Young Gentlemen: The King having heard the Particulars, Orders, that to prevent all occasion of Quarrels, and as a Satisfaction for the Death of the Father, the Son of him that kill'd him, should Observe the following Orders:

I. If He was Invited, or had occasion to go to any Company, if the Other Gentleman was there, He was not to go; or if He was there before, He was to rise up and go away, unless in either Case the Other Gentleman Invite him to stay; and if the Other Gentleman did Invite him to stay, or to come into his Company, then he Inviting was Answerable for any Quarrel that should happen, and must break the Peace at His Peril.

II. He was oblig'd, neither by himself, Servants, Dogs or Horses, to come upon any part of the other Gentleman's Lands, and if in pursuit of any Sport, the Game run upon this Gentleman's Estate, the other was immediately to call off his Hounds and Servants, and give it over.

It happened sometime after, that this Gentleman, whether on purpose to Insult him, or in Contempt of the King's Command, or eager in Pursuit of some Fowls, comes on Horseback with 2 or 3 Servants, and shoots at some Game over the very Pales or Wall of his Park.

Had the injured Gentleman suffered the Insult, and made his Complaint to his Majesty, he had, no doubt, receiv'd full Satisfaction, and the other a severe Punishment.

But instead of this, he goes out with his Servants and pursues the Gentleman, and fires at him; and in this manner they Insulted one another every day, till it began a little Civil War in the Country: at last it came to the King's Ear; his Majesty had Certainly Punished him most that went out and Fired at him, but for the Remembrance of his Father's being kill'd by the same Man's Father; they were both Confin'd for some

some time, and learnt dearly enough to know what it was to break the King's Orders; they were not Dismissed after a long Imprisonment, without giving very good Security, not to Insult each other, or break the Peace; and ever after they lived in good Neigh-

bourhood, and grew very good Friends. I could fill this Paper with Innumerable Particulars, if Authors were search'd, to supply us with the Positive Absolute Submission which the Gentry of *France* have shewn to the King's Command in this Particular.

Mercure Scandale :

O R,

A D V I C E from the Scandalous C L U B.

THE Author made some Reply last Paper, to one of the Exceptions taken at the Proceedings of the Society, and is glad what he said there, has the Success of being thought just by such Men whose Judgment he has Reason to Value.

The second Article was, That no Man ought to take upon him Publick Reproof, and point out other Folks Crimes, unless he was sure *he had none of his own.*

If this were true, *the Lord have Mercy upon us*, there is all our Clergy *Unchurch'd*, and their Mouths stop'd at a blow; the Stocks and Whipping-Post may serve to make Bonfires for joy, the first time we Relieve the *Camisars*: all our Justices of the Peace may lay down their Commissions, and Magistracy will die of a Convulsion; in short this is a Common-wealth Principle with a Vengeance, for there must be no King in *Israel*, but every Man must do what seems good in his own Eyes.

As for the Author, he owns himself in the Rank of those *who have most Infirmities*, and where he is Guilty, shall be freer to Acknowledge, than any reasonable Man to Accuse; but what is this to the Paper, for as Recrimination is the poorest Defence any Man can make, so it is no manner of Answer to the Matter; and the Author Challenges all the World to Charge him either with Error in History, Mistake in Geography, Partiality in Parties, or Falsity of Fact, as for his Style he refers it to Censure.

And the ingenious Author of the *Courant* has therein taken a great deal of pains to

shew the World he himself is mistaken, since I do not question his understanding *Dutch*, and giving in a true Translation; But if we will alledge that he is to Translate, not render the Language, there I say he is wrong; and tho' I think I have not us'd him so roughly as to Merit such hard words as he gives, and shall not return him any; yet I still insist on it, and appeal to all Men of Letters to Judge, *That My Observations are just.*

1st. In the Case of the Cruelties, of Pulling down Crosses, as it must be Nonsense in itself, so 'tis not Material to me, whether 'Tis the *Brussel Gazetteer's*, or his own; but since he is pleas'd to come off from it, by pretending to a Literal Translation, I would be glad to know, whether when the Paper he Translates speaks any *French Nonsense*, he thinks he is excusable to put it into *English Nonsense*, and there I leave it.

Then as to the word *Felony*, 'tis very Immaterial to us what *Felony* is suppos'd to signify in the *French*; I know this Gentleman understands what it means in *English*, better than to have rendred it so, if he had foreseen it; and therefore by better Judgments than my own, my observation is just in that particular, and he has not perform'd the part of a just Translator in this Case neither, because *Felony* in *French*, and *Felony* in *English*, are different things; if he had said he was Guilty of *what they call Felony* against the King, it had been right enough; the

tho' I ask his pardon for Directing him.

I have a Case exactly like this, among my remarks on the *News Papers* in the Author of the *London Post*, who I suppose will be very angry at my naming him again; he tells us, the King of Poland has taken the Prince *Jacob* and *Alexander Sobiesky*; Now this is a Translusion, and the same French signifying *James* and *Jacob*; this Gentleman may allege he is Right, tho' there is no such Prince in the World.

And tho' I beg this Gentleman's pardon for making Comparisons, having no Reason to Question his being a capable, and a careful Translator, yet I alledge in this, he is mistaken, and am ready to submit my remarks to any Impartial Judge; and if I am wrong, I'll not fail to make him *U'ndam'd Honourable*. The rest of his Observations I shall Clear as I go on.

When this is all said, the Author pretends to one thing more, That neither in this, nor any thing else, can any of these Accusers Charge him with the same Errors he has reprov'd, he has neither Sin'd against Sense nor against *Englisb*, as the Persons he reproves have done.

And therefore with Submission, his being Subject to Mistakes, neither lessens the Credit of what he says, nor unqualifies him for Publick Animadversion.

But if he chances to slip, as *Humanum est Errare*, he Reviews and Corrects his own Mistakes, with all the Care and Circumspection he can; and that the Gentlemen he Remarks upon, wou'd do the same, is all he desires; and to prove this to be true, he appeals to one of the most Angry Authors of all our New-Writers, to whom he took the Pains to shew some of the most Gross and Nonfensical Errors that an Author cou'd be guilty of, and desired he would make an Errata for them, which he promis'd, but afterwards answer'd it was not worth his while.

Besides this, he very seldom gives the World any Remarks of an Author's Mistakes, till he has given a Months time at least to Correct them; and as some Wiser than the rest have not thought it below them to Correct their Errors, he has ac-

knowledg'd their Care as well as Honesty.

Nor are the Errors he has Corrected above a Tenth Part of those which he has to shew upon most of them, by which it appears he has not taken all Advantages; and to prove this, and to prevent formal Stories, the World shall have an Index of Particulars.

He that does not think it worth his while to amend his Mistakes, ought not to be Angry at being told of them; and since he puts so little Value on his Readers, as not to think it worth while to write Sense for them, nor to mend Mistakes, he Civilly calls them all Fools, and takes it for Granted they can't distinguish.

However, The Author of this Paper offers to Capitulate, and hereby makes a fair Proposal, If the Gentlemen will agree to write Truth, and to Correct themselves, when they find any slips of the Pen, and consequently impose no more upon the World, they shall hear no more of this Troublesome Fellow's Correction; but if they will Declare open War with Truth, Geography, History, Language, and Sense, he stands them fair, and asks no Quarter.

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